



For Immediate Release

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***ENZI: EXPANDING OPPORTUNITIES FOR SMALL BUSINESS,  
WORKING FAMILIES IS KEY TO ECONOMIC GROWTH,  
JOB CREATION***

**Washington, D.C.** – The American economy is strong and continues to grow steadily, U.S. Senator Mike Enzi (R-Wyo.), Ranking Member of the Senate Health, Education, Labor and Pensions (HELP) Committee, said today, while promising that he will continue supporting efforts to expand opportunities for small business and working families, drive economic growth, promote job creation, and ensure that America's workers have the knowledge and skills to be successful in the global economy.

“We must recognize that financial prosperity and job security cannot be legislated,” Enzi said. “The Congress cannot wave a magic wand and federally mandate every American a well-paying job with gold-plated benefits for life.

“But we can foster the economic conditions that allow growth, which in turn create jobs, raise wages, and sustain benefits. On the other side of the equation, we should do all we can to ensure that America is producing workers who possess the necessary skills to move themselves, and our economy, forward.”

During today's hearing on “Economic Opportunity and Security for Working Americans,” Enzi praised the strength of the American economy, which has seen 40 consecutive months of job creation, resulting in over 7.2 million new jobs since August 2003 – more than every other industrialized nation combined.

“Our economy is on the right track,” Enzi said. “The benefits of this strong economy are reaching employees. Real average weekly earnings, adjusted for inflation, rose by 2.3 percent over the year ending in November 2006. That translates into an extra \$1,420 for the typical family of four with two wage earners.

“Since small businesses create the majority of new jobs in today's economy, if we want to stay on the path of economic and employment growth, we must take care not to take actions that make them less likely to compete and succeed,” Enzi said. “When small businesses can succeed, they can provide good wages and benefits for their employees.

When their success is hampered by excessive and burdensome regulations and mandates, it hurts everyone who works for that small business and their families.”

Enzi said that reauthorizing and improving the nation’s job training system that was created by the Workforce Investment Act is essential to providing American workers with the knowledge and skills they will need to be successful in the global economy.

“The potential skills gap facing American workers only deepens when we are compared to our competitors around the world,” Enzi said. “As the Chairman of this Committee I was able to travel to some of the foreign countries which are among our toughest competitors in the world market. I came home believing strongly that we must focus much more seriously on the acquisition and improvement of job and job-related skills.

“This is a critically important topic. I want to thank Chairman Kennedy for making this the first HELP hearing on Labor issues of the 110<sup>th</sup> Congress; and thank the panel for their willingness to participate in this important dialogue.”

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